DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 147 RC 021 617

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TITLE Collaboration on Campus: Teaching Rural High School Students through College Methods Classes.
PUB DATE 1998-04-17
NOTE 29p.; Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association (San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College School Cooperation; Cooperative Programs; Educational Planning; *High School Students; High Schools; Higher Education; *Microteaching; Preservice Teacher Education; Preservice Teachers; Program Evaluation; *Rural Schools; Secondary School Teachers; *Student Attitudes; *Teacher Attitudes; Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS *Collaborative Learning; Western Montana College

ABSTRACT

This paper describes and evaluates a 2-year collaborative project between two rural high schools and a teacher education college in Montana. An introduction covers rural teaching issues, rural school advantages and disadvantages, the demographics of the participating schools, rural collaborative efforts, and the microteaching experience. High school students came to the college once a week for 6 weeks to be taught lessons prepared by preservice teachers in conjunction with their methods course. Over a 2-year period, 170 participating high school students, 10 high school teachers, 3 administrators and 160 preservice teachers were surveyed to ascertain the effectiveness of the program. Evaluation methods included questionnaires, oral and videotaped interviews, debriefing sessions, observational and anecdotal evidence, and journals kept by the preservice teachers. Responses from teachers, administrators, high school students, and preservice teachers are summarized. Analysis highlights collaborative resonance (program enrichment through school-college collaboration), consensus building, collaborative planning of lessons and units, the value of reflection and critique for preservice teachers, positive student attitudes toward social studies and history, and increased college aspirations among students. (Contains 42 references.) (SAS)

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Collaboration on campus: Teaching rural high school students through college methods classes

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Annual Meeting

San Diego, California

April 17, 1998

RC 021617

Abstract

This two-year project involves collaboration between two rural high schools and a small college whose primary mission is in teacher education. Students from the high schools came to the college once a week for six weeks to be taught lessons prepared by preservice teachers in conjunction with their methods courses (microteaching). The research questions investigated the effect of this experience on the high school students, their teachers, the school administration and the preservice teachers. This essay addresses the advantages and disadvantages of schooling in rural America; summarizes the surveys, interviews and observations from the high school students, their teachers and the preservice teachers; and the briefly analyzes and evaluates the issues that arise from bringing the rural high schools and the rural college together.

Collaboration on Campus: Teaching Rural High School Students through College Methods Courses

In Linda Darling-Hammond's recent book The Right to Learn, she calls for new strategies for teacher learning. She promotes the importance of the "tight coupling" of theory and practice for teachers. She, in essence, addresses a long-standing problem in teacher education, the "do as I say, not as I do" approach in teaching professional courses:

> Teachers learn just as their students do; by studying, doing, and reflecting; by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see (Darling-Hammond, 1997, p. 319).

These are also important elements for preservice teachers. Recent articles on educational theory and research have focused on the collaboration that Darling-Hammond and others advocate. One of the features of this study, however, is that collaboration takes place in the rural American West between two high schools and a college whose major focus is teacher education. A second feature is that collaboration occurs on site at the college campus where rural high school students are taught by preservice teachers.

The rural context

Although multicultural issues have been a big focus in education in recent years, rural culture is often not one of the cultures involved in the discussion. The images of rural communities and schools are often overshadowed by the needs and images of larger urban populations. Poverty, for example, is a concern in both urban and rural areas, but the urban poor receive

the bulk of the attention even though by some measures rural poverty is higher than urban poverty.

In terms of education, most rural school districts have shrinking enrollments of less than 2,500 and are faced with state funding formulas that favor urban schools. Compared to larger schools, rural schools have fewer curricular choices; less technology; fewer library resources; higher costs per pupil; lower teacher pay; and fewer services for special education. The advantages, however, are that rural schools often have strong community support for school functions, a high percentage of student participation in school activities, a common sense of purpose, and a small student/teacher ratio (DeYoung & Lawrence, 1995; Herzog & Pittman, 1995; Hobbs, 1995; Miller, 1993; Muse, Smith & Barker, 1987; Seal & Harmon, 1995; Stern, 1994; Stevens & Peltier, 1994; Theobald & Nachtigal, 1995).

The realities for rural teachers reported in both the United States and Australia include teaching in more than one subject area or grade level (sometimes without appropriate certification), supervising a variety of extra-curricular activities, and coping with close scrutiny from the local community. On the other hand, rural teachers get to know the students very well, have smaller class sizes, are able to give more individualized assistance, and experience fewer bureaucratic layers than teachers in larger schools (Higgins, 1992; Hare, 1991). Many of these qualities have been hailed by researchers who find students in small schools eager to learn and participate. Sergiovanni, apparently finding common ground with "Cheers", suggests "a good school should be

small enough for everyone to know one another by name" (Sergiovanni, 1995, p. 49).

Although the merits and concerns of education in rural areas can be objectively analyzed, those same issues can cause real dilemmas for rural parents and communities. Rural parents want a good education and more economic opportunities for their children, but they usually do not their children to reject their rural roots and move to more urban centers. (Herzog & Pittman, 1995). And although most rural communities have a strong sense of tradition and common values, students are often cut off from the cultural capital needed to access knowledge, power structures and people outside their immediate region and communities (Giroux, 1993; Apple, 1990).

Two high schools in the West

Recent literature about rural schools has often focused on schools on Appalachia and the Southern United States and Australia. Our experiences with rural schools in the Rocky Mountain West show similarities but also differences with these studies. First of all 73% of the schools in the state featured in this study are defined by Federal guidelines as rural or "nonmetropolitan" (Stern, 1994). The dropout rate in rural schools in this state varies considerably, as high as 50% on and near some Indian reservation schools, and as low as 1% in other areas. The economic stability of some rural ranching communities is very high and many ranchers in this state have some college education. About 12.3% of the children live in poverty compared with a national level close to 25%. Although cultural diversity

is found in terms of socio-economic levels, ethnically this state's student population is 88% white (Keenan, 1995). However, the relative isolation, long bus rides, limited access to library and technology resources, and lack of opportunity to know a larger world are true in the Rockies as well as in Appalachia.

Both high schools involved in this project are located in white, middle-class communities dominated by ranching and small businesses supporting ranching. Madison High School* has a student enrollment of 120 and is located in a county with a per capita income of about $15,000 and an unemployment rate of 5%. Income has remained relatively flat over the last decade. The county student/teacher ratio is 14.4:1. Red Rock High School*, enrollment 40, is located in a county with a per capita income of $17,066, an unemployment rate of 4.3%, and slow increases in income and population. The student-teacher ratio at Red Rock is 10:1. Both schools have about a 1% teen pregnancy rate and a 1% dropout rate. The average parent in both communities has 1-2 years of college (Montana kids count, 1995; private communication, Superintendents of Red Rock and Madison).

Becoming a teacher in rural America

Western Montana College, the teacher education institution featured in this project, enrolls approximately 1100 students, 80% of whom graduate in teacher education. Located in a county the size of Delaware but with a population of only 9,000, it is about 45 miles from the two rural schools. Although the students at the college are primarily white (96%) and from rural backgrounds, the college has experienced a slight increase in ethnic diversity.

The 4% nonwhite enrollment is predominantly Native American (18) and Hispanic (12) with 4 international students and 4 African American students.

"Becoming a Teacher in Rural America", the title of Western's NCATE report, captures of the spirit of its teacher education program. At Western a commitment to rural education is part of the mission statement in teacher education, "providing specialized knowledge and practice for teachers in rural settings" ("Becoming a teacher," 1996, p. 46).

The conceptual framework for the program, accredited by NCATE in 1997, is grounded in cognitive development, constructivism and the rural context. Development is not only a focus for children and adolescents, but also preservice and beginning teachers. Frances Fuller's (1969) three-phase concerns model of preservice teacher development is a key element. According to Fuller preservice teachers are initially focused on self concerns and survival skills. As they gain experience, they move to task concerns, characterized as methodology and logistics and finally, impact concerns, their effect on the students and what the students are learning. An instrument to measure Fuller's model was applied and the stages were verified by Rogan, Borich & Taylor (1992). Other work that informs the developmental aspects of the program include novice to expert research (Leithwood, 1990). Constructivism, too, has its roots in developmental theory. Constructivism defined as developing knowledge (cognitive structures) through active participation and reflection (Phillips, 1995). These themes are evidenced at Western through semester-

long student inquiry projects; sequences of clinical and field experiences designed to help students move beyond survival concerns in the classroom; and collaboration with fellow students, professors and school teachers in planning and executing integrated, thematic units.

The primary clinical experience, microteaching, takes place during the preservice teacher's professional semester. The rationale reflects both Fuller and Goodlad's ideas. The intimacy of small group teaching plus peer evaluations give the preservice teachers immediate feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching strategies, what does and does not motivate young adolescents, and learning outcomes. They are able concentrate on task concerns and set aside, for the moment anyway, discipline concerns. Trying out their teaching skills in a "safe" environment enables the students to "transcend their previous experience, as relatively passive course-takers and become active agents in the learning of others" (Goodlad, 1990, p. 290).

For the microteaching experience, elementary and secondary education majors design and teach lessons to rural students who come to the college campus once a week over a six to eight week period each semester. Preservice teachers plan the lessons in consultation with the clasroom teacher and their college instructor. Then they present the lessons to a small group of high school students (student/teacher ratio of 5:1). The lessons are evaluated by peers, the methods instructor and/or a teacher who is present. Some lessons are videotaped and critiqued by the preservice teacher.

Through microteaching, the preservice teachers 1) developed thematic, integrated units; 2) used resources other than textbooks; 3) developed methods of authentic assessment, including self-assessment; 4) provided the rural students with people from different cultures, exposure to different ways of teaching and computer technology; 5) worked with special needs students on a one-to-one basis; and 6) reflected and critiqued their development as future teachers.

Collaboration and rural culture

Collaboration and professional development schools are of major interest in teacher education today. As Darling-Hammond (1996) and others have pointed out, such ventures can encourage teacher research, inquiry, reflection and more valid means of assessment of prospective teachers.

A key issue in all collaborative efforts is the bridging of two cultures, in this case the cultures of the rural high schools and the local college. Leming (1989) and others have addressed the two cultures of schools and colleges. One of the key conflicts arises from the schools' assumption that its mission is to transmit knowledge and to socialize students into the existing social order. The college, on the other hand, encourages countersocialization, independent thinking, and a critical look at the status quo. This can result in teachers being skeptical of university "experts". On the other hand, it is common for teacher educators to raise concerns about the "folk pedagogy" that informs practice in many schools (Bruner, 1996). These are traditional practices and belief systems about teaching that many teachers

embrace without question and are sometimes not supported by the research on best practice. If the teachers see the college "experts" as interfering and the college faculty see the teachers as well-meaning, but inept, this does not lay the framework for effective collaboration.

Getting this program started involved careful negotiations. New superintendents in both high school districts in the mid-1990s asked the college for assistance in providing a better education for their students. When the project began, one of the schools in this study had no art classes and the students at the other schools had the same teachers for two or more subjects. Neither school had access to more than a few computers and no access to the Internet. Lab equipment and library resources in both schools were limited. Educational methods instructors from Western appeared before both schools boards to propose that the high school students be sent to the college once a week for a six week period to be taught lessons by preservice teachers and to be given access to the college technology and library. The school boards composed of conservative, independent minded Westerners asked many tough questions. Most involved issues of cost, which students could profit most from the experience and concerns about time out of school. The Red Rock School Board initially wanted to send only the best students as a reward. The college instructors convinced them that the preservice teachers needed to work with the full range of students. Both school boards voted to support the microteaching concept.

In order to further address the concerns raised by different

cultures and traditions, politics, logistics, accountability, scheduling and expenses, the college methods instructors met with the teachers and administrators at their respective school sites. Some of the logistics were made more challenging because there was no outside funding for the project. The students would need to pay for their own lunch while on campus. The high schools would furnish transportation and allow teachers to accompany the students to campus. The business education program at the college would pay for paper and notebooks for the high school students.

Negotiations with the teachers on the idea of microteaching focused on two factors. First was offering rural students access to a much larger library, computer technology, lab equipment, a broader curriculum and ideas from people from other cultures. Students from both schools were white, primarily middle-class; some had never been to a large city nor talked with people from another culture. Secondly, the methods instructors emphasized the need for help from the schools to provide the best program for future teachers that involved both the college and the expertise of the teachers in the field. In addition, the methods faculty agreed to conduct free in-service days for the schools either at the school site or on campus.

Curriculum. The curriculum varied each semester depending on what is negotiated between the methods instructors, the classroom teachers and the preservice teachers. One semester a thematic approach was developed around Native Americans for the art, social studies and English classes. Although this was received well, further negotiation took place for the next semester. One of the

English teachers proposed that he would like for the preservice teachers to teach a novel instead. He and the college methods teacher decided to do John Steinbeck's The Pearl during the six week experience.

One social science teacher requested that the high school students get a stronger background on culture. In response, the methods teacher and students then planned lessons around the six themes from the National Geographic Society, which was supported by the teacher. One of the science teachers, however, wanted to see closer connections between the microteaching lessons and the science curriculum at the high school.

Physical education was another area of negotiation. The juniors and seniors at Red Rock did not take P.E. and were not happy about taking it at the college. After listening to their comments and the teacher's ideas, the preservice teachers in P.E. offered racquetball the following semester and this was received with much more enthusiasm.

Accountability/assessment. Many of the teachers raised concerns about accountability. How would the student work be evaluated? Would the preservice teachers give grades? Some teachers from both schools asked that the preservice teachers assign grades as they believed the students would not take their work seriously without them. The college methods faculty resisted by pointing out that the preservice teachers would not have sufficient evidence or background to assign grades. Instead it was agreed that written comments would be made about the work of

each student in each subject. The focus would be on effort, level of participation, and evidence of achievement.

The methods faculty and teachers reached consensus that all student work on campus was assembled into notebooks, and these were sent to the teachers and parents at the end of the six weeks. Initially all subjects were in one notebook and this made a logistical problem when 4-5 teachers needed to see each notebook. It was decided that for future semesters, there would be a separate folder for each class taken at the college

Results

Over a two year period, 170 participating high school students were surveyed, 10 high school teachers, 3 administrators and approximately 160 preservice teachers. The specific instruments and methods used to evaluate the project were 1) questionnaires given to the high school students, high school teachers and preservice teachers; 2) selected oral and videotaped interviews conducted with participating school personnel (teachers, administrators), parents of high school students, school board members, high school students, and preservice teachers; 3) debriefing sessions with high school teachers, administrators and school board on site at the schools, 4) observational and anecdotal evidence; and 5) journals kept by preservice teachers.

The initial results of this research are summarized in terms of responses from teachers, administrators, high school students and preservice teachers:

Teachers. The high school teachers had a variety of roles. They helped plan the curriculum for the units to be studied at the college; they accompanied the students on the bus and helped account for them during the day on campus; they observed the classes and gave feedback for individual lessons and also made general suggestions to the preservice teachers. They helped evaluate the program at the end of each semester, brought up concerns and shared ideas for improvement.

During the two years of the project, 90-100% of the faculty at the participating high schools supported returning to the college for additional microteaching experiences. All teachers surveyed saw a benefit in the program for preservice teachers, citing the importance of planning and executing lessons with real students. Their comments included: the program is a "major benefit to preservice teachers" and it is "good for WMC students to work with ages they will be certified for".

Ninety percent of the teacher responses indicated that planning and curriculum had improved from the first experience to the second: "a major improvement from first time to second in terms of organization and preparation".

A variety of benefits for the high schools students was reported. Teachers overheard students talking about going to college who had not talked about it before. Also noted was the value of "learning in a different environment," a "change of teaching technique," "exposure to new technology," "senior exposure to college campus," "opportunity to [for] enrichment in an area not provided by their high school because of lack of

equipment or facilities", an emphasis on "critical thinking skills," individualized attention to math students based on ability, a "change of pace", "exposure to campus", and "high school students' enthusiasm".

Some teachers became aware of new teaching ideas. According to one teacher, "some of the ideas are 'eye-openers' for the regular teacher and may lead to improved presentations in their classrooms". Another noted a heightened awareness of the importance of critical thinking skills for their students. A third was intrigued with integration between art, literature and social studies in a unit on Native Americans. An English teacher was excited about a social studies lesson in which the rural students were discussing differences in music tastes with an African American college student from Los Angeles. A dynamic verbal exchange took place between the rural students and the college student about the merits of rap versus country or rock.

Accountability and evaluation was a major concern of about 50% of the teachers. One suggested that "no grades made assignments seem not as valuable." Another called for more follow-up and research on outcomes.

The time spent on the bus, the loss of classroom time and the experimental nature of the program were cited as disadvantages by some teachers. Comments included: "loss of time from regular classroom," "travel and time", "hard to lose 5 days," "not all students appreciate the experience", and high school students are "guinea pigs" for an experiment. One teacher raised a concern

about the high school students being taught by novice college students instead of the more experienced regular teachers.

A number of teachers offered suggestions for improvement. One was "allowing seniors to attend a class of their choice" at college. They also had suggestions to the preservice teachers on the importance of being prepared, using standard English, and treating the high school students as young adults.

Administration/School Boards. Both rural school boards approved returning to the college. One superintendent expressed a desire for mini courses and enrichment instead of the current program. He especially wanted more emphasis on technology and hands on experience. Both administrators requested inservice for their teachers conducted by the college faculty, and two inservices have been held. The college faculty listed topics they were prepared to speak about and the teachers selected what was most relevant. Technology has been in high demand as well as current thinking on motivation.

High school students. Between 90-100% of the students reported that they wanted to return at the end of each semester. A major reason given is that it was fun: "...it was fun coming here"; "The teachers always have something fun in mind for us to do and usually we enjoyed what there is to offer"; and "Yes, I would like to come back, this is fun and I actually learned something, and it gave me the chance to get out of [Madison]."

The opportunity to take classes that provided instruction in technology (business, computers, industrial technology) also got high marks from the teachers. One student commented that he

"really didn't know much about computers before" and another "it helped me learn about the Internet". Technology as a hands-on experience was also a factor. "Learning about technology and just getting out of [home town] are the best things about coming to the college." A knowledge of technology is especially important for students in rural areas because of the relative isolation from much of the cultural capital (technology, libraries) that is available to student in more urban areas. Also the Internet gives them access to a larger world.

Working with real problems, technology and hands-on activities were frequently mentioned by students. Examples include experiments done in science, working with real problems and calculators in math, working with computers, surfing the Internet, and art projects.

Rural high school students responded with much enthusiasm and curiosity to classes that featured ideas and people from other cultures. Sample student responses include: "I thought China would have more telephones." "The coolest part was learning stuff about another culture (Los Angeles) from someone who lived there." Comments were very supportive of guest speakers from China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Japan and a Native American. Based on observation of these sessions, students were not passive listeners but engaged speakers with lots of questions such as asking the Russian speaker about crime in Moscow, communism, etc. Some also expressed some cognitive dissonance after hearing a Native American speaker in their art classes who talked about spiritual beliefs that differed from Christianity.

About 10% of the students viewed their experience of taking classes at WMC as a factor in considering college as a future goal. Most reported they had not considered this before. One student's comment: "Maybe I can go to college. Being here makes me feel that I can do it.". Another reported, "After being here, I kinda think that coming to college is a strong possibility". Another student stated that taking classes at WMC "as had me really thinking about becoming a teacher."

Negative comments from students focused on preservice teachers who talked down to them and on being required to take physical education as part of the project. Some college-bound students were not enthused about classes in business law and industrial technology. During the first semester of the project a few juniors and seniors skipped school on one of the microteaching days. Some expressed the attitude that coming to the college was more like an extracurricular activity. The juniors and seniors did not like taking physical education at the college since that was not part of their curriculum at the high school.

The students responded with insight when evaluating the preservice teachers. One student noted: "Your strengths were you always asked us if we had questions. You could have explained some stuff better and been more fluent though." Their comments included observations about "hands-on" experience, questioning strategies used by the preservice teachers, overuse of "um", "you know" and "okay".

Preservice teachers. Ninety percent reported that the microteaching was the most valuable part of their methods classes

and that they were better prepared to student teach at the end of the first year. Close to 100% stated that the microteaching experiences were beneficial to their development as educators. They cited the primary strength of the program is being allowed to plan a sequence of six lessons for "a live audience with real kids". The authentic context was cited by many of the preservice teachers.

Another strength of the program cited by the preservice teachers was working in a collaborative environment:

> The collaborative planning sessions not only helped us to plan each lesson more effectively, but gave us a chance to discuss what went well, what didn't work, and what we could do to improve things for the next lesson...since one lesson leads into the next, we had the opportunity to back up the reteach something important or tie together ideas that we seemed to miss after we thought about and evaluated what we had done.

According to another preservice teacher:

> Working in planning/teaching groups allowed to focus on teaching; whether or not the...students were getting it or learning. We weren't so worried about planning something that would work because we all had good ideas to help...and we didn't have to worry about controlling the class so much because we were in groups could concentrate more on whether or not the kids were learning

Many preservice teachers realized that planning efficacious lessons takes a significant amount of time, effort and thought.

One student noted: "I never realized how difficult it is to plan good lessons...the good teachers seem to make it look so easy when they teach that I never thought about how much work it takes to prepare lessons"

The preservice teachers also reflected on what went right, what went wrong and how to proceed. For example, anecdotal evidence in the social sciences involved observation of preservice teachers "telling" instead of "doing". When faced with only a small number of students (4-10), in a small room, they couldn't avoid seeing the glazed over looks and the inattention. They also became aware of answering their own questions, students who dominated and those who did not participate, how to motivate students when no grades are given, the importance of enthusiasm, planning, background knowledge (the mountain range in Peru is the Andes, not the Alps), the importance of not letting personal lives interfere with lessons, and getting the lesson and the time to fit together. They then experimented with ways to get a better responses: bringing ethnic food when talking about another culture, relating historical events to local events, the cautious use of video, the Internet, sharing personal experience when relevant (travel to Spain, experience in Gulf War), creating a map or battle scene in three dimensions, asking for higher level thinking (compare/contrast, debate, etc), and using music. In the Spring, 1996 session, the Red Rock students rated the history classes as highly valuable, specifically mentioning hands on, speakers from other cultures, music, simulations the Internet activities.

While the majority of comments were positive, preservice teachers expressed some concerns about the program: "the lessons of [my] group seemed a little disjointed at times- not bad thought-because they had to wait a week to continue to teach the Sheridan kids". Some liked the time lapse because it allowed each group to prepare an effective lesson for the next week. Some wanted more time to teach: "had to share their teaching time with the other members of the group" Some problems with group dynamics: "We worked well as a group, but one person always had to dominate and try to take over when it wasn't his turn to teach"

Analysis and Discussion

Collaborative Resonance. The results of this project seem to lend support to the notion of collaborative resonance (Cochran-Smith, 1994). Collaborative resonance is based on the idea that collaborative programs with public schools and colleges "create learning opportunities different from and richer than the school or the university can provide alone" (p. 147). Ideas about accountability, for example, came out of the meetings with the teachers and college faculty that were different from the ideas that each held beforehand. Examples of negotiating between the school teachers and the college teachers included developing methods of assessment, deciding which students would profit most by coming to the college, and designing curriculum.

Consensus building. Based on the experiences encountered in this study, it appears that rural schools and colleges are a good place for discourse and consensus-building about how to best prepare teachers. With smaller numbers of people involved who

...en already know each other, less bureaucracy, issues that can be more easily defined, and a real sense of place, there is a good chance of affecting change that benefits all. Wendell Berry (1990), a champion of rural life, supports the idea that in rural America we can help us build consensus for what is good for society as a whole.

Collaborative planning of lessons and units. The experience supports the idea that preservice teachers learned that planning lessons/curriculum is a complex, higher cognitive skill that requires a significant amount of time and effort to determine what to teach, how to select appropriate methods, and how much time to devote to given topics and activities (Doyle, 1990). In addition, it appears that the group planning sessions served as an instructional scaffold (Bruner, 1966) that gave students the support that they needed as they worked within their "zones of proximal development" in learning to teach and specifically to focus more on instruction than on management (Vygotsky, 1962). The scaffold of the collaborative learning groups may have enable any of the preservice teachers to focus more of their concerns and reflections on Fuller's (1969) "teaching situations concerns stage" and "pupil concerns stage" instead of focusing their attention primarily on the "survival concerns stage" and many of the students noted that their confidence increased in their own abilities as a result of their microteaching experiences.

Reflection and critique. The value of preservice teacher's reflecting on their own experience is supported by Dewey (1933), Calderhead (1989), Goodlad (1990) and many others. The preservice

teachers' reflections suggest that they were being informed by their practice and using relational knowledge as a primary way of knowing about their teaching (Hollingsworth, Dybdahl, & Minarik, 1994).

Social studies/history. Some of the high marks the high school students gave the history lessons are counter to the research that suggests that most high school students hate history (Loewen (1995). Meeting people from other cultures and doing activities were especially mentioned.

Going to college. This is important in light of research that suggests that rural high school students have lower aspirations than their urban counterparts (Haller & Virkler, 1993).

Conclusion

In conclusion, we feel that collaboration between rural schools and a rural college is a microcosm for what it means to be a part of a community. By working together both the schools and the college share limited resources, strengthen and change the nature of teaching and learning and offer another example to the discourse on the nature and merits of school-college collaboration.

> It is curious that rural communities, which for so long have been marginalized by the dominant culture, have precisely the qualities for which the critics of American schools are now looking. As educators, we need to recognize these strengths, take advantage of them, and build the preparation of rural educators around them (Herzog & Pittman, 1995, p. 118).

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